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**ON THE PIANO** — Representative Steve Holland of Plantersville provides accompaniment for his fellow legislators who offered special music for the annual prayer breakfast for legislators February 7 in the Sky Room of the Baptist Building in Jackson. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

# Legislators breakfast at Baptist Building

**By Tony Martin**  
*Associate Editor*

The Baptist Building of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) hosts many groups and individuals during the course of a year, but seldom a group as appreciative as the Mississippi state legislators.

For the second year, all state legislators were invited to a legislative prayer breakfast, hosted by the Christian Action Commission (CAC) of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

The breakfast, held Feb. 7,

attracted legislators from across the state who are in Jackson for the annual three-month session.

Jimmy Porter, CAC executive director/treasurer, stated, "The purpose of the breakfast is simply to encourage the legislators, to let them know that Mississippi Baptists are their friends, and that we do pray for them."

"We basically just wanted to thank them

for the service they render to Mississippians," Porter continued. "We feel they want to do what's best for the state, and they do need to know they are appreciated."

The legislators were served a full breakfast beginning at 7:45 a.m. After breakfast and some introductory remarks by Porter, the attendees were treated to Gospel singing by a quintet composed of the legislators who had formed an impromptu musical group.

Participating in the group were Mike Eakes, Philadelphia; John L. Moore, Brandon; Joey Fillingane, Sumrall; Mark S. Formby, Picayune; and Greg Snowden, Meridian. Steve Holland, Plantersville, accompanied on piano.

"You've heard of the Singing Senators?" asked Porter after their performance. "You've just been treated to the Rip-Roaring Representatives!"

Following the music, Jim Futral, MBCB executive director-treasurer, brought a devotional. Using the passage from Matt. 23 in which Jesus grieves over Jerusalem, Futral asked the legislators, "How do you view the nation?"

Some are "unloving critics," said Futral, referring to one possible view of the country. Others are "uncritical lovers." Continuing with the message, he stated, "Some are loving critics, and that's the attitude Jesus had."

The attendees were universal in their appreciation. Several mentioned how grateful they were to have their day started in such a fashion.



**PRAISING THE LORD** — Members of the Mississippi House of Representatives perform a hymn at the annual prayer breakfast for legislators February 7 in the Sky Room of the Baptist Building in Jackson. The vocalists included (from left) Mike Eakes, Philadelphia; John L. Moore, Brandon; Joey Fillingame, Sumrall; Mark S. Formby, Picayune; and Greg Snowden, Meridian. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Travis Little of Corinth, president pro-tempore of the Mississippi Senate, said, "First of all, I'd like to thank Jimmy Porter for inviting us. We really received a blessing. Dr. Futral was right on target — it was just what we needed to hear."

"It's nice to know our neighbors across the street are praying for us. We thank the Board for hosting it for us. I hope it continues to be an annual event."

"I think it was a wonderful idea," said Greg Snowden. "It's great to be around fellow Baptist folks for fellowship and prayer. What I especially appreciated was that no one tried to

lobby or hustle us — it's just an enjoyable morning."

When asked about the CAC's relationship to the representatives, CAC consultant Lee Yancey said, "Our responsibility is to keep up with what's going on, monitor bills, and inform Mississippi Baptists in four ways: morally, ethically, socially, and legally. We will occasionally attend committees or subcommittees to hear discussion of various issues.

"With over 712,000 Southern Baptists in Mississippi out of a state population of 2.84 million, those are some numbers that might mean something to our legislators."

## WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

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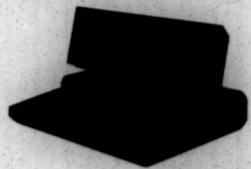
## Miss. CP sets record

The Mississippi Cooperative Program (CP) set a new all-time record in January as Mississippi Baptists gave \$3,389,338 to the work of the Lord, according to Jim Futral, executive director/treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. The single-month record follows a record-setting year in 2001 in which Mississippi Baptists gave a total of \$29,826,248 to CP. January 2002 CP giving was also the second January in a row that a new single-month record was set, eclipsing the January 2001 total of \$3,214,155, by 5.45%. Also, a near-record CP amount of \$3,063,702 was given in October 2001. Messengers to the 2001 Mississippi Baptist Convention annual meeting approved a record 2002 budget of \$30,522,692, which means CP giving averaging \$2,543,558 monthly will be needed to meet this year's budget. Mississippi CP helps fund such programs as the Christian Education Clinic February 16 at Highland Church, Meridian; the State Youth Keyboard Festival February 23 at Woodland Hills Church, Jackson; and the Sunday School Growth Workshop February 26 at Parkway Church, Clinton.

## SBC CP sees increase

**NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — An increase of 11.86% in churches' gifts to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program (CP) was recorded in January 2002 over January 2001, according to a news release from SBC Executive Committee President and Chief Executive Officer Morris H. Chapman. January's \$17,427,725.96 in CP Missions gifts to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America was \$1,850,903.91 above January 2001 gifts of \$15,576,822.05. In designated giving during January, meanwhile, the total of \$19,539,370.26 was .32% above January 2001's \$19,477,495.88, an increase of \$61,874.38. In year-to-date CP giving, \$60,791,298.29 has been received compared with \$59,214,895.73 in 2000-01, marking an increase of 2.66% or \$1,576,402.56. In year-to-date designated giving, \$31,621,613.99 has been received compared with \$29,524,093.72 in 2000-01, marking an increase of 7.10% or \$2,097,520.27. For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the January receipts of \$17,427,725.96 were 117.29% of budget, surpassing the budgeted \$14,858,239.92 by \$2,569,486.04.**

## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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# Dear Legislator...

**T**he 2002 session of the Mississippi Legislature is revving up to full-speed, as proposed legislation that passed a first set of deadline hurdles are in committees and will soon be coming up on another series of deadlines.

As anyone knows who even casually tracks the annual three-month sessions of the Legislature, many bills are introduced but relatively few make it into law. The complex set of checks and balances both inside the legislative process and in the broader branches of state government have a tendency to winnow the hundreds and hundreds of bills that are filed and pre-filed for each session.

Legislators have to absorb their share of criticism, cynicism, and caricature during their time under the hoary domes of the New Capitol in downtown Jackson. Some of the ridicule showered on them is likely deserved (by some of them, anyway), but a fair amount is not deserved.

They are, after all, our fellow Mississippians. For every citizen who couldn't find their way to either chamber in the Capitol but feels free to regularly slam legislators, there are at least a few of us who realize that most legislators are well-meaning people who must put aside their families, businesses, and

community activities for one-quarter of each year to come to Jackson for the session.

That's no small sacrifice, so it would behoove us to occasionally tell them how much we appreciate the effort even as we loudly complain about what we perceive they are doing or not doing.

The Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission (CAC) has some helpful hints on how to make contact with legislators, how to get a point across without dooming favored legislation, and how to follow up on the progress of important measures:

♦ **The best communicating is done face-to-face.** Make an appointment and be on time. Bring an outline of the one or two main

issues you want to discuss. Be brief, recommend specific solutions, and leave a written summary of your important points.

It's fair to ask the legislator for his/her position on the bills in which you are interested. Don't take it personally if the legislator disagrees. Rather than argue, discuss differences in a pleasant manner.

♦ **If a personal visit is not possible, write your legislator.** Writing can save a legislator's time (a plus in your favor) and provides a record of your position on proposed legislation. Include your full name, address, and telephone number. The address for legislators while in session is P.O. Box 1018, Jackson, MS 39215-1018.

♦ **Do your research.** Know the bills about which you are writing, and include any specific information you have such as the bill number and details. Bill status can be attained by calling (601) 359-3719 while the legislature is in session, or by going to [www.ls.state.ms.us](http://www.ls.state.ms.us).

♦ **Telephone calls do not substitute for personal visits and letters.** When telephoning legislators, however, make efficient use of your time with them. Identify yourself and the bills you are for or against (again, one or two main issues is a good limit). Explain your reasoning and let them know how you want them to vote. The telephone number for legislators while they are in session is (601) 359-3770. Just as with personal visits and letters, end the conversation by expressing your thanks for their time.

♦ **Citizens can request to testify before committees about bills they strongly support or oppose.** Find out the name of the appropriate committee chairman and contact him as soon as possible. If given the opportunity to testify, get to the point quickly and



Mississippi State Capitol, Jackson

be prepared to answer any questions legislators may have about your position.

The CAC, a ministry funded by the Mississippi Cooperative Program, stands ready to assist Mississippi Baptists who want to get involved in this grand process of self-governance we enjoy in our state and nation. They can be reached at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3329 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 329. Fax: (601) 292-3350. E-mail: [rwood@mbcb.org](mailto:rwood@mbcb.org).

Take the time to get involved, or else just be content with whatever comes out of the legislative pipeline. Those are really our only two choices; on which side of the pipeline will you stand?

## GUEST OPINION:



### Ministering in time of crisis

By Rebecca Ingram Powell

**D**eath. Prolonged illness. Broken marriages. Financial problems. Addictions. These are just a sample of the many crisis situations that a pastor will face in the course of his ministry.

How can the church family assist its pastor and minister to people in crises? The way you respond to members of your church family who are "going through the fire" can make an eternal difference. Not only will it impact the life and relationships within your own church, but it will also be an outreach to everyone affected by the crisis, including non-Christians who are part of the circle of extended family, neighbors, co-workers, and friends. The urgency of turmoil will often cause people to seek Christ for comfort and help. Even if you don't have a degree in counseling, there are five things you can do to encourage your Christian friends in crisis and reach out to unbelievers as well.

♦ **Be there.** When my husband Rich was injured in a severe car accident, I was so thankful for the people who came to sit with me while he was in the emergency room and later in the critical care unit. You may think that there's

nothing you can do, but when a family is waiting on a doctor's diagnosis or x-ray results, there's nothing anyone can do. Waiting together is much preferred to waiting alone.

♦ **Be sensitive.** A lack of sensitivity on our part most often leads to crisis situations being overlooked. Unfortunately, our busy lives can hinder us from reaching out to one another. Perhaps we need to devote more time to building relationships within the church. Intimate friendships are not easily brewed along with the coffee before Bible study on Sunday morning. They are slow-cooked in the warmth of a welcoming home and during other times of deeper fellowship.

♦ **Be committed.** It's all too

easy to muddle the essential after-care during difficult times. When the immediate crisis is over, casseroles and pot roasts are no longer necessary-but the church family must still be available. After the death or divorce of a spouse, home isn't the same anymore. Most people would gladly receive an evening shared with another family.

♦ **Be practical.** In times of crisis, the spiritual must link with the practical. Jesus demonstrated this. His ministry was one of hands-on action while still speaking to the needs of the soul. On the balmy summer night of my husband's accident, I'm thankful for the person who offered me a blanket in the cold emergency room. I'm indebted to

the couple who slipped a roll of quarters into my hand so I could grab something from the vending machine. I'm grateful for the friend who offered to make the necessary phone calls and send the e-mails so that I wouldn't have to tell people what happened over and over again.

♦ **Be quiet.** What could be worse in the aftermath of a suicide, divorce, or financial ruin than idle chatter from a trusted church family? We need to be vigilant as we guard our tongues during the tough times, keeping confidences and details to ourselves, even when inquiring minds want to know. Restrain yourself when it comes to giving advice, as well.

You don't have to be quiet when it comes to praying for families in difficult situations. Be there, on your knees, to intercede for them. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading, and he will guide your prayers. Be committed to praying for the families long-term.

Practically speaking, your prayers will make the eternal difference in your ministry to families in crisis.

Powell is a regular columnist for Baptist Press in Nashville.

# Woman prays for release of seminary pal

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — New Tribes missionaries Martin and Gracia Burnham have suffered a harrowing reality for the past eight months. The Burnhams were kidnapped in the middle of the night and since have been forced on the run with their captors, in the jungle, dodging bullets and authorities.

Video footage released by their captors showed the couple with obvious signs of malnutrition and illness.

The torturous plight of the Burnhams has been an agonizing concern for Southern Seminary student Marjorie Clark. A friend and former roommate of Gracia at Calvary Bible College in Kansas City, Mo., Clark has followed the Burnhams' situation almost from the start.

She first heard about their kidnapping shortly after it happened. On May 27, a Muslim extremist group, Abu Sayyaf, took the Burnhams at gunpoint while the missionaries celebrated their 18th wedding anniversary at a resort off the island of Palawan in the Philippines.

Some 20 others were also taken. The terrorist group has killed several captives, including a California man. The group has been linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida terrorist network.

"They were taken literally in the middle of the night, and so they don't really have anything with them," said Clark, a Highland, Ind., native and a master of arts student at the Louisville, Ky., seminary.

"Supposedly, they have sores on their mouths from



MISSIONARY HOSTAGES — Martin and Gracia Burnham, missionaries in the Philippines kidnapped by an Osama bin Laden-related terror group, as they appeared in footage aired in November on TV in the island nation. (BP photo)

poor nutrition. Their feet bleed. He [Martin] is chained to a tree every night," she said.

The Burnham's plight recently became more vivid and visible to Clark and to the world, as CBS aired a videotaped interview of the Burnhams Jan. 21 on the CBS news program "48 Hours."

Seeing Gracia — who Clark cherishes as "somebody that you laughed with, somebody that you talked to late into the night with, somebody you sang a lot with" — and viewing her suffering on television was disheartening for Clark.

The visuals were especially troublesome given the fact that the interview was filmed two months ago, and their conditions could only have worsened.

"This [suffering] has been so difficult for [Gracia]," Clark said. "She's a very upbeat person. She's a very outgoing person, happy, funny. So it was ... discouraging to see her so emotionally distressed. Her hands kept shaking and coming up to her lips that were shaking."

Clark still has faith that the Burnhams — who have served

in the Philippines since 1986 — are remaining strong in their faith.

"Both of them still maintained their sense of humor," said Clark, giving her impressions on the interview. "You could see their personalities still coming out even in the midst of the horror they are living through."

She and fellow seminary student Lizette Beard were so moved that they set up a website — [www.praythemhome.com](http://www.praythemhome.com) — to garner publicity.

"I believe that prayer's the one very powerful thing that we can do," said Beard, a master of divinity student from Mountain Home, Ark., who handled the website design.

Clark hopes the Burnham's enduring and persevering faith will end up pointing others — even the their captors — to Christ.

"I would love to see the fellow hostages that they are with come to know Christ, and I believe there is a great opportunity there because of the witness that they have," Clark said. "... I would not be at all surprised to see some of the hostage takers — especially some of the younger ones — be really impacted by their witness."

Currently, no end of the Burnhams' captivity is imminent — though some hope did surface recently. More than 600 U.S. troops joined with soldiers in the Philippines Jan. 15 to begin military training exercises focused on wiping out the Muslim extremist group who captured the Burnhams.

The fact that no real progress has been made in eight months is discouraging for friends and especially family. Frustration is compounded by the fact that attempting to track the kidnappers in the jungle has proved extremely difficult.

In fact, some might deem the Burnhams' situation hopeless, but Clark is not so quick to discount the power of prayer.

"I really believe that God can rescue them miraculously, and I believe he can show himself very, very great through all of this," Clark said.

Convinced of God's power to deliver, Clark has recently begun an effort to encourage others to pray for the Burnhams and to make as many people as possible aware of their plight. The methods have been as varied as they have been impassioned.

## THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

# Record

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"I do believe that they were chosen to suffer," Clark said. "I don't know why, and we might not ever know the reason why on earth."

"I'm OK with that. I do believe that there is and will be a great reward for them for their suffering."



ROOMMATES — Southern Seminary student Marjorie Clark (left) and imprisoned missionary Gracia Burnham in a graduation photo from 1981. The two were roommates at Calvary Bible College in Kansas City, Mo. Burnham and her husband, Martin, have been prisoners in the Philippines since May 27, 2001. (BP photo)

## LifeWay bestsellers

### HARDBACK

1. Bringing Up Boys, James Dobson (Tyndale)
2. Traveling Light, Max Lucado (Nelson)
3. Prayer of Jabez, Bruce Wilkinson (Multnomah)
4. Secrets of the Vine, Bruce Wilkinson (Multnomah)
5. Night Light, James & Shirley Dobson, Multnomah
6. Praying God's Word, Beth Moore (Broadman & Holman, LifeWay trade publishing arm)
7. Spiritual Leadership, Henry & Richard Blackaby (B&H)
8. Grace for the Moment, Max Lucado (Nelson)
9. Prayer of Jesus, Ken Hemphill (B&H)
10. Heaven: My Father's House, Anne Graham Lotz (Nelson)

### PAPERBOOK

1. Power of a Praying Wife, Stormie Omartian (Harvest House)
2. Power of a Praying Husband, Stormie Omartian (Harvest House)
3. Power of a Praying Parent, Stormie Omartian (Harvest House)
4. Praying God's Will for Your Life, Stormie Omartian (Nelson)
5. Five Love Languages, Gary Chapman (Moody Press)
6. Case for Faith, Lee Strobel (Zondervan)
7. Attack on America, John Hagee (Nelson)
8. God's Grace from Ground Zero, Jim Cymbala (Zondervan)
9. Sacred Romance, John Eldredge (Nelson)
10. Humor for a Woman's Heart, various writers (Howard)

## Looking back

### 10 years ago

Wyatt Hunter, widely-respected pastor emeritus of First Church, McComb, died recently. He was the pastor of the McComb congregation for 30 years, from 1938-1968, when the church experienced large growth.

### 20 years ago

Alta Woods Church, Jackson, completes a Church Building Fund Budget campaign, pledging \$769,372 toward a budget of \$767,000, plus pledging over \$1 million over three years toward building needs.

### 50 years ago

The 33-year-old evangelist Billy Graham, standing before an estimated crowd of 40,000 at the nation's capitol, states, "I ask the Senate and House to request the President as we stand at this abyss of national destruction to set aside a day of confession of sin, humiliation, repentance, and turning to God."



MISSISSIPPI  
BAPTISTS

# Somalia firefight survivor spreading Gospel

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Jeff Struecker never asked to be famous. Two days in Mogadishu, Somalia, though, forever changed his life. Those two days — Oct. 3-4, 1993 — will never be forgotten in United States military history. What began as a peacekeeping mission ended in a firefight.

Eighteen American soldiers died. Many others were injured. Somalis dragged the bodies of dead soldiers through the streets, and Americans witnessed it all on the evening news.

Struecker was there, recovering the bodies of his fallen brethren and rescuing his fellow soldiers.

"I have never really been shaken up about Mogadishu — even after it was over," said Struecker, a graduate of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky. "God just took care of all of those things for me."

Nine years after that firefight, more and more people are learning about the heroism of Struecker and his fellow U.S. Army Rangers. The movie, *Black Hawk Down* — rated R for excessive language and graphic violence — was released in January. Brian Van Holt plays Struecker's character.

The History Channel broadcast a two-hour documentary, *The True Story of Black Hawk Down*, which includes several clips of an interview with Struecker.

In light of the movie and documentary, Struecker has conducted more than 20

interviews with various media outlets, including ABC's *Good Morning America*.

During each interview, Struecker shares his faith in Jesus Christ, telling the reporter — as well as the audience — what brought him through the battle. "I tell people that I had a strong faith when I went there, but God really strengthened it while I was there and now I have a belief that transcends death," he said. "Really, it's a peace that God gave me that most soldiers didn't have."

Following the battle in Mogadishu, Struecker discovered that many of his fellow soldiers were searching for answers. The on-site chaplain, though, had none, and did little to assist the soldiers' spiritual needs.

Struecker's heart broke as he watched his friends agonize over their fallen comrades. Struecker may not have known it at the time, but God was preparing him for full-time ministry.

Today, Struecker is serving in Fort Bragg, N.C., as chaplain for a field artillery battalion in the 82nd Airborne. He is the pastor to roughly 500 soldiers and their families.

"I thank God for what he has allowed me to do as a result of the movie and the documentary," he said. "I've had a chance to do a number of television interviews. Inevitably, people will ask me, 'Well, how did you end up as a chaplain?' That presents an opportunity for me to share my faith."

If a question about his faith doesn't come up, Struecker makes sure he broaches the subject. "They'll say, 'Is there anything else you want to add?' I'll say, 'Yes, absolutely. I want to tell you how I had the strength and the courage to do what I did that day.'"

Struecker has been pleasantly surprised with the coverage he has received. He initially believed that reporters would edit

out references to his faith. However, that has not been the case. The History Channel documentary even includes a comment from Struecker about him praying.

"What has really blown me away has been the amount of press that has decided to cover my faith," he said. "I thought, 'Well surely they'll edit all of that out.' I thought even the History Channel would edit a lot of that out. But they decided to leave a comment in there about me going to the Lord in prayer, asking for strength."

Struecker is just as open about his faith around his soldiers. The movie, coupled with the events of Sept. 11 — have presented him with opportunities he would never have had. Soldiers who might be sent to the Afghanistan region come to Struecker — simply because he has been in the heat of battle.

"I've had the privilege to stand before my men while the U.S. is conducting offensive actions against the Taliban in Afghanistan," Struecker said, "and I could say, 'Listen, this could be you, and it could be soon. And if you are not sure of your eternal destiny, then we need to talk.' It gave me the opportunity to share my faith. Since then I've seen dozens of my soldiers come to Christ."

"The privilege to be able to stand among that many non-believers is something that no other pastor has. To be able to do it in a time like today is a great privilege. I consider it a great responsibility."

"God has given me this opportunity, and I need to make every effort I can to give him credit."

Through it all, Struecker makes sure he's not the focus of the story. "I just pray that God will be made the hero of Mogadishu," he said, "and not me."



**SHARING HIS STORY** — Former U.S. Army Ranger Jeff Struecker, interviewed for a recent History Channel program, describes the tragic events in Mogadishu, Somalia, that served as the basis for the new movie, *Black Hawk Down*. (BP photo)

## Graham to be nominated for SBC president

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP) — Texas pastor Jack Graham "very likely" will be nominated for president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) when the annual meeting convenes June 11 in St. Louis, Jerry Vines announced Feb. 4, in Jacksonville, Fla.

"I have been told that it's very likely that he's going to be nominated to serve as president of the SBC this year," Vines told the annual Pastors' Conference at First Church, where Vines serves as senior pastor.

Graham is senior pastor of Prestonwood Church in Plano, Texas, north of Dallas. The church is one of the nation's largest Southern Baptist congregations, with more than 20,000 members.

In 1992, Graham presided over the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference. He delivered the annual sermon at the 1993 Southern Baptist Convention and in 1994 nominated Jim Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church of Orlando, Fla., for SBC president.

### IS THAT ALL THERE IS?

On January 22, 2002, Peggy Lee died at the age of 81. This smooth singer, who for so many years had maintained her popularity with young and old alike, had finished her song here on earth.

One of her best known songs was a question — *Is That All There Is?* Her song was punctuated repeatedly by looking at one facet of life after another — both pleasures and pains — with the haunting return of the question, "Is that all there is?"

I never met Peggy Lee and I do not know anything about her spiritual background. I also do not know about her faith, or lack thereof. One thing I do know is that she now knows the answer to the question — for the combination of comings and goings, getting and giving, living and losing, is not all there is. There is, thank God, more to come!

From a Christian standpoint and certainly from a Biblical standpoint, we ought to put a bright light of focus on what is to come. The Bible teaches that every one of us is facing one of two eternal destinies — Heaven or Hell. Both are real. Both are in the Bible. Both are just beyond death, and both are worthy of us teaching and preaching.

Somewhere back down the line somebody told folks, and even influenced many of our preachers, that people are real-



## Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

ly more concerned about the "here and now" and not about the "by and by."

Well, certainly the Bible speaks to the here and now and offers us directions for our confusion, health for our infirmities, hope for our emptiness, and a powerful, caring Savior who will walk with us every step of every day. We are not going to be here forever and we need to be prepared when death comes.

Heaven is going to be a glorious place. For those who say, "We don't know what it is going to be like," a look into the Word of God will open up wonderful, new vistas that are exciting and enjoyable.

I fully understand that as the Bible says, "eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the imagination of man all the things that God has prepared for him," but he did tell us some things and what he told us is worth talking about.

The Bible tells us that Heaven is the place where God

is and Jesus is glorified. It is a place of perfect peace and harmony. It is a place without pain or heartache. It is a place where all of the people of God are going to be gathered and everything that should not be there will be excluded by the command of God.

While it may be true that we cannot fully comprehend everything about Heaven, it is also gloriously true that we can attain Heaven through Jesus Christ our Lord. Hell, too, is real. The Jesus who told us of Heaven and said, "If it were not so, I would have told you," also told us of a place of eternal separation from God that is painful, filled with sorrow, and unending.

Hell is a place where Jesus isn't! That may be a little bit of a strange way of describing Hell, but it is true. Everything that Jesus is and offers will be absent from Hell. He is the water of life — there is none there. He is the light of the world — it is dark there. He is our comforter — there is suffering there. He is

our encourager — it is hopeless there. Jesus is not there because everyone who goes there chooses to live without him, reject him, ignore him, and refuses his offer to save.

Every so often one of those poll-taking groups checks our mental condition and spiritual perception, and asks how many folks believe in a Heaven, a Hell, or a God. It is interesting to see how, from time to time, the numbers go up and down.

I've often wondered what these polls mean, because one thing is for certain — they really do not affect anything! There is a God who sent his Son, Jesus, so that we might have everlasting life. He offers to us forgiveness of our sins so that we might spend eternity in Heaven with him. We can refuse his gift and he provides that our desires to live without him be met in a place called Hell.

God does not operate by opinion polls or personal preferences, but according to his clear, unmistakable, unchanging Word. There may be no clearer understanding of what God has done for us than in that one statement, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life."

At this very moment you can trust him. Open your heart, receive Jesus, and be saved — forever, and ever, and ever. Amen.

# Billy Kim: 'lowly houseboy' to BWA head

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — If not for the kindness of an American soldier, Sgt. Carl L. Powers of Virginia, Billy Kim said that he would not be a Christian and the current leader of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA).

After Kim's school was bombed during the Korean War, he decided that "working for an American soldier would be the next best thing to getting an education." In exchange for Hershey bars, C-rations, and cigarettes that his mother would sell on the black market, Kim cleaned soldiers' tents, gathered their firewood, and made certain that the fires in their stoves were not extinguished.

Kim spoke at Southwestern Seminary Jan. 30 and described how Powers took interest in a "lowly houseboy."

Kim said that he didn't speak English — other than curse words he had learned from American GIs — and he had no money, but Powers saw potential in him and promised to provide the funds necessary for him to study in the United States if he could get permission from his mother.



Billy Kim

At first she declined the offer because she feared that she would never see her son again. She accepted the offer only after Powers promised her that Kim would return.

"I had no choice of the country in which I was born. We were so poor, but I had a chance to come here and study," Kim said. "I wanted to study political science, go back to Korea and become a politician — because in my country, if you become a

politician, a lot of people give you money and you are not going to be poor anymore.

"God had something else on his mind," Kim said. Shortly after Kim began his university studies, a Korean graduate student led him to Christ. He rushed home and told Powers that he had trusted Christ.

"Sgt. Powers said, 'You know, I have never trusted Christ as my Savior.' That afternoon, there on the back porch, he opened his heart to Christ," Kim said.

Powers paid for eight years of Kim's education as promised. "He paid for my tuition, my shoes, my clothing, and my books," Kim said.

Today Kim pastors the 12,000-plus-member Central Baptist Church in Suwon, South Korea. He also is president of the Asian Baptist Federation and director of Christian Service, Inc., in Seoul and the chaplain of the Korean National Police.

He also founded Suwon Central Christian Academy and Capital Bible College and Seminary in South Korea.

In 1979 Kim's son contemplated his own call into the ministry. Kim said that if he wanted

to study for the ministry the United States would be the place to accomplish the task.

Kim brought his son and the rest of his family to the United States by way of the Holy Land.

When Kim phoned Powers and invited him to join the family on the trip, Powers said that he would go on one condition. "I've never been baptized," Powers told him. "If you will baptize me in the River Jordan, I will come."

"I was able to baptize the man who meant so much to me, a man who went beyond the call of duty of his country, who befriended a houseboy, brought him to this country, gave him an education, and sent him back to his own people," Kim said.

"I have seen literally hundreds of thousands of people come to Christ because of Sgt. Power's efforts. Don't underestimate the power of Jesus Christ," Kim added.

Kim's admonition to his chapel audience was that they, too, should view Christ in the same way: as the God who can use even a houseboy to share the Gospel of love and redemption. God has done so, Kim said, because he is supremely concerned with reconciling the souls of men.

## BWAid to offer aid after disaster

WASHINGTON (BP) — Baptist World Aid (BWAid), the relief and development arm of the Baptist World Alliance, has made initial emergency grants of \$30,000 to help those who have fled the volcanic eruption of Mount Nyiragongo.

The emergency grant will be used to purchase food and cooking utensils to assist those who have sought shelter in Baptist buildings in Rwanda. However, with many thousands of people on the move, more funds will be needed to help those who have been made homeless, officials said.

The Southern Baptist Convention is a member of the Baptist World Alliance.

# Dobson joins critics of gender-neutral NIV Bible

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (BP) — James Dobson said he will not support the gender-neutral Today's New International Version (TNIV) revision of the widely used 1984 New International Version translation of the Bible. Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family and one of the nation's leading evangelicals, noted in a prepared statement:

- "I have now received sufficient feedback from a large number of evangelical scholars to convince me that this new work is a step backward in the field of biblical translation. Accordingly, I am now adding my name to the list of those who disagree with the liberties [the International Bible Society (IBS)] has taken with God's Word in the new translation."

- "I love the Scriptures and I know them to be the very words of God to his creation. Like most evangelical Christians, I want my Bible to contain an accurate translation of the canonical Hebrew and Greek texts. Accordingly, I will continue to speak out against any effort that alters God's Word or toys with translation methodology for the sake of 'political correctness.'"

- It is "particularly unfortunate that the IBS has now chosen to go its own way" by withdrawing its endorsement of 1997 Bible translation guidelines developed in the wake of controversy over IBS plans, at the time, to introduce a gender-neutral Bible in the U.S. market by 2001. Dobson stated that the IBS "risks dividing the Christian community again, as well as damaging its own reputation and undermining the wonderful work in which it has been engaged for more than 150 years."

The Today's New International Version (TNIV) was unveiled Jan. 28 in an announcement by IBS, the copyright holder of the NIV, and Zondervan, the NIV's publisher.

By the end of the week, however, a group of evangelical scholars had signed a statement declaring that "we cannot endorse the TNIV translation as sufficiently accurate to commend to the church."

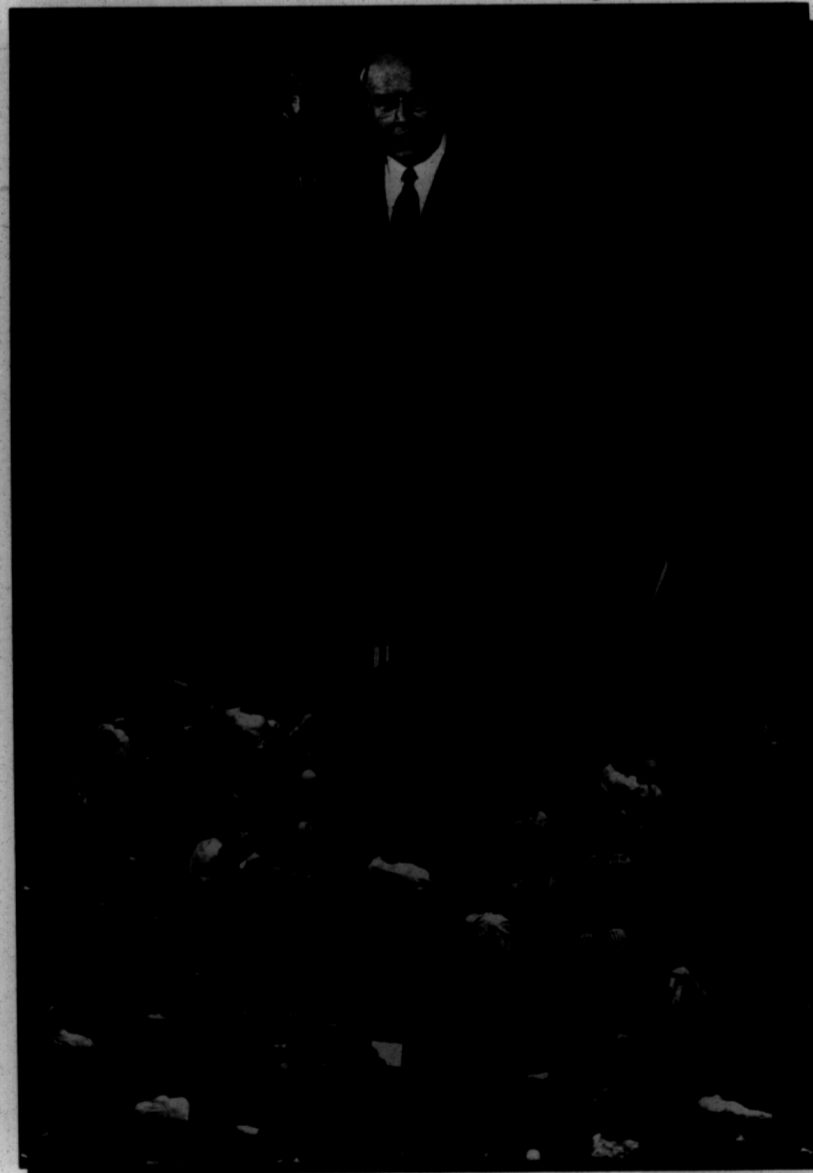
The one-paragraph statement, now signed by 31 scholars, cited "troubling translation inaccuracies — primarily (but not exclusively) in relation to gender language — that introduce distortions of the meanings that were conveyed better by the original NIV."

Signatories include two Southern Baptist Convention seminary presidents, R. Albert Mohler Jr. of Southern Seminary and Paige Patterson of Southeastern Seminary; Wayne Grudem of Phoenix Seminary in Scottsdale, Ariz., and a past president of the Evangelical Theological Society; Harold O.J. Brown of Reformed Theological Seminary; R.C. Sproul of Ligonier Ministries; John Piper of Bethlehem Church in Minneapolis; and Raymond C. Ortlund Jr. of First Presbyterian Church, Augusta, Ga.

Another leading theologian, J.I. Packer, did not add his name to the signatories, but told Baptist Press the TNIV is "a retrograde move ... . The masculine pronoun belongs in almost every language of the world. The gains that this translation seeks to achieve are far outweighed by the loss."

IBS, as of Feb. 6, had not returned several calls from Baptist Press seeking comment on the unfolding reaction to the TNIV. IBS/Zondervan, on its [www.tniv.info](http://www.tniv.info) website, has listed a number of TNIV endorsers, including author Philip Yancey; Craig Blomberg of Denver Seminary; Gilbert Bilezikian and Gary Burge of Wheaton College; Mark Strauss of Bethel Seminary San Diego; and John R. Kohlenberger III, editor of "The Exhaustive Concordance to the Greek New Testament."

Much of the criticism of the TNIV has been spearheaded by the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, which has posted on its [www.cbmw.org](http://www.cbmw.org) website a 12-point "Concise listing of TNIV inaccuracies" and a longer list of more than 100 challenges to TNIV gender-related renderings.



DOBSON ADDRESSES SBC — James Dobson, founder and president of Focus on the Family in Colorado Springs, Co., speaks by satellite to messengers to the 2001 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in the Superdome in New Orleans. An aircraft problem prevented Dobson from appearing in person at the meeting. (BP photo)

## JUST FOR THE RECORD



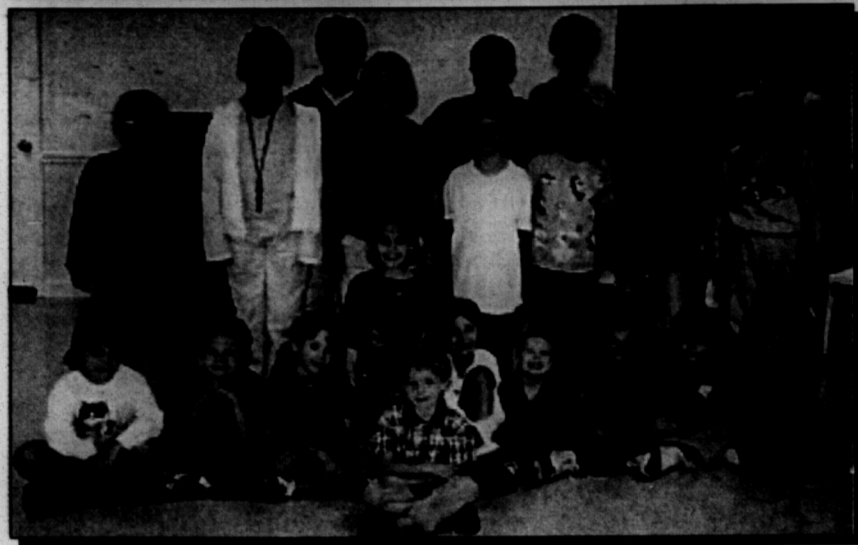
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(*I believe in Jesus.*)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him.  
(*I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.*)

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.



Mission organizations of Mt. Comfort Church, Bruce

**GAs of Mt. Comfort Church, Bruce**, participated in Christmas in August by preparing stockings for the needy children in Birmingham, Ala. Pictured are Mission Friends, GAs, RAs, and Youth on Mission.

**DeSoto Church, Shubuta**, will host a Winter Bible Study on Feb. 17. Randall Creel of Lake is the evangelist, and Robbie Early, music. Jim Smith is pastor.

**Arkabutla Church, Arkabutla**, will host a Winter Bible Conference, Feb. 28-March 3. Guest preachers will be Bill Stafford, Chattanooga, Tenn.; Jimmy Millikin, Mid-America Seminary; and Desi Ginn, Southaven. Tim Cline is host pastor. For additional information, call (662) 562-5191.

**Karen Peck and New River** will be featured in concert on Feb. 15 at Hazel Church in Lake. The concert will begin at 7 p.m. For additional information, call (601) 683-2053.

**Women of Grace, Flowood Church, Flowood**, will present the Ladies' Prayer Retreat, March 8-9, at Camp Garaywa. The speaker is Laura Leathers and music by Tricia McNulty. Registration deadline is Feb. 28. For additional information, contact the church office at (601) 992-6464 or (601) 992-6393.

**Men's ministry of Gracewood Church, Southaven**, will sponsor a couples retreat at the Ervin Brown Training Center in Eudora, Feb. 15 and 16. The guest speakers are Paul and Rhonda Barkley. Activities will include a meal served Friday at 6 p.m.; session from 7-9 p.m.; and a Saturday morning session following breakfast. For additional information, call the church at (662) 393-2549.

**Winter Bible Conference** will be held at Gracewood Church, Southaven, Feb. 22-24. Sigurd Bryan, Bible professor at Samford University, will be the guest speaker. The times are Friday, 7 p.m.; Saturday, 6 p.m.; and Sunday, 9:15 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. For additional information, call the church at (662) 393-2549.

**Keith Carpenter** will be the guest speaker in the 6:30 p.m. service at Old Union Church, Shannon, on Feb. 17. For additional information, call (662) 767-8831. Kenneth Kelly is pastor.

**Fishers of Men Tournament Trail** for the Central Mississippi Division will begin Feb. 16 on Ross Barnett Reservoir. This fast growing bass fishing trail couples the excitement of a competitive tournament with a Friday evening banquet where the Gospel is shared with the fishermen and their families. The banquet will be held in the fellowship hall of Ridgecrest Church, Madison at 6:30 p.m.

The weigh-in will begin at 3 p.m. on Feb. 16 at Tommy's Trading Post on Hwy 43. For more information call Jim Phillips at (662) 453-7818 or (662) 392-3474.

**Children's Mission and Youth/College Career classes** of Mt. Gilead Church, Meridian, held a bake sale, delivered Christmas cards, and collected money through mission organizations to help meet the goal of \$800 for Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. Total received was \$1,625.26. Children's leader is Diane Ward; Bobbye Jean Knight, WMU director; and Jimmy Sanders, interim pastor.



Mission organizations of Mt. Gilead Church, Meridian

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**THE MARSHALL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION** in Alabama is accepting resumes for a director of missions. Send resumes to: Search Committee, Marshall Baptist Association, 3555 AL Hwy 69 W., Guntersville, AL 35976. Deadline is March 1, 2002.

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**Don and Rose Marie McCain**, missionaries to Portugal, were the special guests for Acteen's Day recently held at Old Union Church, Shannon. Keysey Logan, daughter of the McCains, is director of Acteens for Lee County Association. Kenneth Kelly is pastor of Old Union Church.

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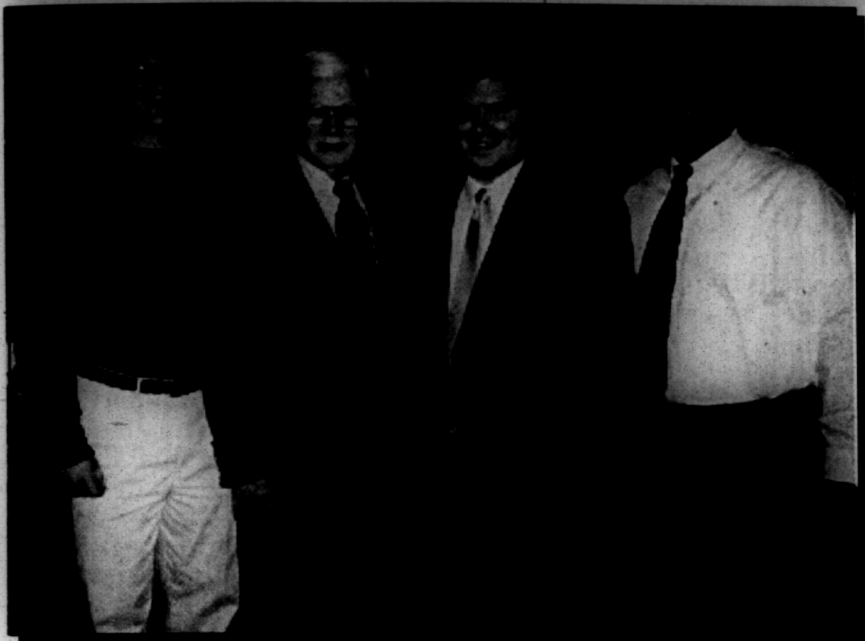
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**ALTA WOODS BAPTIST CHURCH**, Jackson, Miss., is now accepting applications for the position of church organist. The position will be available May 12, 2002. Please submit resume to: Music Committee, Alta Woods Baptist Church, 168 Colonial Drive, Jackson, MS 39204.

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR** weekday ministry program. Approximately 180 children. Please forward resume and salary requirements to: Assistant Director Position, 302 West Jackson Street, Ridgeland, MS 39157.

**PART-TIME CHILDREN'S MINISTER** at Bayou View Baptist Church Gulfport. A heart for children is a must. Contact church office at (228) 863-2482 or www.bayouview.org.

## NAMES IN THE NEWS



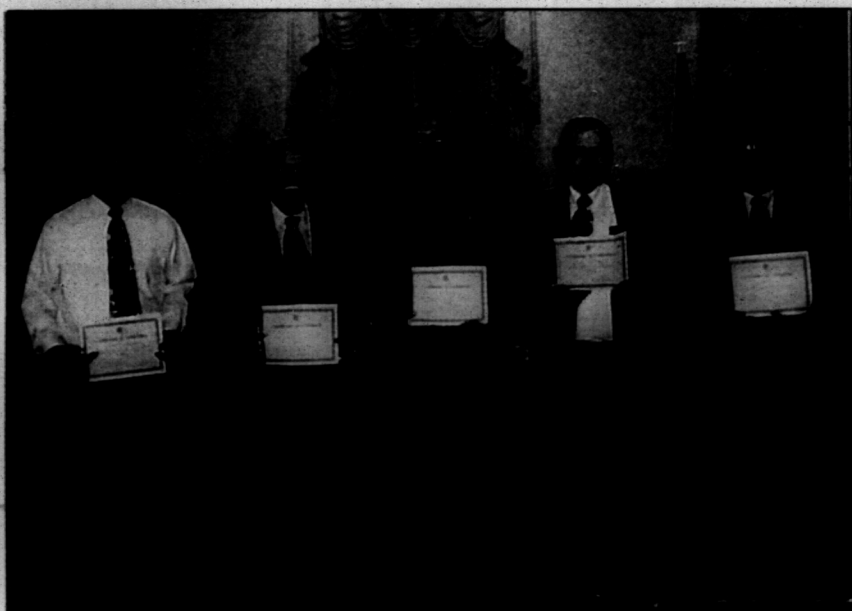
Albritton, Gentry, French, and Gann

Nate French was ordained to the ministry at Wyrndale Church, Metro Association, on Nov. 11. Pictured (from left) are Jay Albritton, former minister of youth; Charles Gentry, pastor emeritus; French; and Don Gann, pastor. French is enrolled in the Beeson School of Theology at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala.

Jason Niles Puckett, 91, of Phoenix, Ariz., died Dec. 23. Puckett, a native of Columbus, pastored in Brooksville and Durant. He was a graduate of Mississippi College and Southern Seminary. Survivors include daughter, Kathy Baker, Marietta, Ga.; son, John Willis Puckett, Laguna, Calif.; brother, Willis L. Puckett, Columbus; and brother and sister-in-law, Joe and Kathleen Stovall, Clinton. Memorials may be made to J. Niles Puckett College of Christian Studies, in care of Grand Canyon University, 3300 W. Camelback Road, P. O. Box 11097, Phoenix, AZ 85061-1097.

Crossroads Church, Petal, held deacon ordination ser-

vices on Jan. 20. These are the first deacons in the history of Crossroads Church. Pictured (from left) are Derek Weatherford; Marion Younce; Tim Fillingame; Rufus Headley; and Malcolm Sumrall, who is also director of music and youth. C. W. Herrin, pastor, and George Bosarge of New Augusta conducted the ordination.



Weatherford, Younce, Fillingame, Headley, and Sumrall

Meadville Church, Meadville, ordained Curt Wilson to the ministry on Jan. 27. A reception was held in his honor. Wilson is interim pastor of Cranfield Church, Adams County. Wiley Reid is interim pastor of Meadville Church.



Collins, Hanna, Miller, and Green

Neshoba Church, Union, ordained Rusty Hanna and James Miller as deacons on Jan. 20. Pictured (from left) are Johnny Collins, pastor; Hanna; Miller; and Levern Green, chairman of deacons.

Richard Floyd, a minister and a member of Country Woods Church, Jackson, is available for supply, interim, or bivocational pastorate. His address is 179 Keriville Drive, Jackson, MS 39212 or call (601) 373-9236.

Unity Church, Pearl River Association, ordained Terry Miller as deacon on December 9. Pictured (from left) are Kent W. Megehee, pastor; and Terry and Loula Miller.

Clinton McLain was ordained to the ministry at Crossroad Church, Wayne Association, on Feb. 3. Participating in the afternoon ceremony were Tommy Davis, pastor of Crossroad Church; Lavon Smith, former pastor of Crossroad Church; and David Roberson, pastor of First Church of Chicora. Roberson delivered the charge to the ministry to McLain. McLain is the associate pastor of First Church of Chicora, Wayne Association. Pictured (from left) are Davis, Roberson, McLain, and Smith.



Davis, Roberson, McLain, and Smith

## Belhaven BSU to sponsor banquet

The Baptist Student Union (BSU) of Belhaven College in Jackson is sponsoring a Missions Dessert Banquet on Feb. 23 at 7:30 p.m. in the dining commons of the new Belhaven Student Center. All proceeds will go toward the BSU Spring Break Seattle mission trip and to the state student missions fund. The cost of the banquet is \$10 per person. For additional information, contact Reid Vance, Belhaven BSU Director, at (601) 968-8901.

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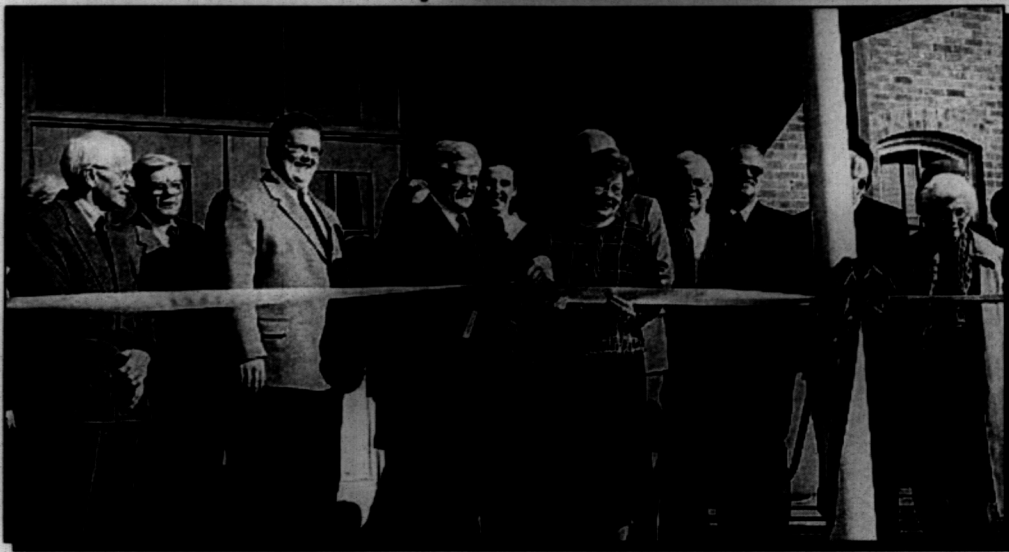
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Ribbon-cutting ceremony at Blue Mountain College

## Former BSU director, Larry Goff, dies

Larry Goff, BSU director for 11 years at Jones County Community College, Ellisville, died Feb. 11. Funeral services were held Feb. 13 at West Ellisville Church, Ellisville, where he served as chairman of deacons. Prior to his work in campus ministry, he pastored Friendship Church, Ellisville, and Edon Church, Stringer.

Goff is survived by his wife Linda Keyes Goff; daughters, Melinda Bradshaw of Ellisville, and Melissa Pearce of Laurel; son, Larry Goff of Ellisville; father, Louis Goff of Jackson; brothers, Louie Goff of Jackson, and Tom Stewart of San Antonio, Texas; and six grandchildren.



Goff

## Revival dates

**Friendship, Aberdeen:** Feb. 17-20; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Mickey Dalrymple, Columbus, evangelist; Jewell Greer, Russell, music; Todd Bowen, pastor.

**Parkway, Houston:** Feb. 24-27; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., noon service with lunch, and 7 p.m.; Billy Smith, Madison, evangelist; James Frances, Pontotoc, music; Gregg Thomas, pastor.

Blue Mountain College officially opened the doors of its newest building on Jan. 25. The 17,000-square foot Bible and education classroom building was named Fisher-Washburn Hall. A brief ceremony was held at 10 a.m. in the Modena Lowrey Berry Auditorium. Those present then proceeded to the Fisher-Washburn Hall for a ribbon-cutting ceremony (pictured). Immediately afterward, tours were given of the new facility. Bible and education classes were taught in the new facility beginning Jan. 28. Special guests for the event included E. Harold Fisher, president-emeritus and Heywood Washburn, immediate past chair of the board of trustees, as well as Sarah Washburn, wife of the late William Washburn.

The handbell choir of Blue Mountain College, (BMC) will be presented in concert at Shiloh Church, Alcorn County, at 5:30

p.m., Feb. 24. Handbell choir members include Anthony Adams, Byhalia; Bonnie Baxton, Horn Lake; Beverly Casteel, Booneville; Debra Francis, Bryan, Ohio; Andrea Harris, Tupelo; Kim Kyle, Selmer, Tenn.; John Phillips, Tupelo; Melissa Potter, Leighton, Ala.; Maria Teel, Red Banks; Jennifer Turner, Ripley; and June Meyer, piano instructor at BMC. A concert of contemporary Christian music will also be performed by Brooke Riley, Nettleton, and Sarah Smith, Baldwyn. For additional information, call the college at (662) 685-4771, ext. 163.

The Mississippi College (MC) Singers under the direction of James M. Meaders, will perform at Carnegie Hall in New York City on Feb. 17 at 7:30 p.m., EST. The MC Singers will be joining five other choral



Handbell choir of Blue Mountain College

Byrd and Moser

groups from the United States who have been invited to perform Mozart's Coronation Mass, and also the New York premiere of John Kuzma's Balm in Gilead.

Elanie Moser of Richton, a 1959 graduate, was awarded the William Carey College (WCC) Distinguished Alumnus Award at Homecoming ceremonies held recently at WCC. A member of First Church, Richton, she has served as a Sunday-School teacher for 35 years and currently teaches senior adults in the W. A. Moser Golden Circle Sunday School Class. Active in senior adult ministry, Moser also participates with Operation Christmas Child.

During her acceptance speech for the Distinguished Alumnus Award, Moser said, "All of this glory is for God." She encouraged the audience to continue their financial support of WCC and spoke of her love for the college. Pictured are Bobby Byrd, president of the alumni association, and Moser during the Awards Luncheon held on the WCC campus.

The Winters School of Music Fine Arts Series 2002 will present a concert by the Capitol Brass Quintet Feb. 19 at 7 p.m. on the William Carey College campus. The Capitol Brass Quintet features a broad selection of classics, Renaissance, Baroque, seasonal favorites, and Dixieland music. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for students and senior citizens. For more information call (601) 318-6183.

## First Church, Clinton, commemorating 150 years

CLINTON, Miss. (Special) — Jerry Rankin, president of the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and a former member of First Church, Clinton, will be the keynote speaker for a February 15 church-wide banquet to celebrate 150 years of service to the Kingdom work of Jesus Christ.

The banquet will begin at 6:30 p.m. in the Grand Hall of the B.C. Rogers Student Center at Baptist-affiliated Mississippi College (MC), across the street from First Church, Clinton. Rankin and his wife Bobbye are both MC graduates and members of the school's Hall of Fame.

Church member and retired MC professor Edward McMillan will serve as master of ceremonies for the banquet. Russell McIntire, pastor from 1952-72, will give the invocation. Bill R. Baker, pastor from 1972-1995, will pronounce the benediction.

Also on the banquet program are church member Rosemary Aultman, mayor of Clinton, who will present a proclamation on behalf of the city; and the pastors of three Clinton churches that were assisted in formation by First Church, Clinton — Morrison Heights, Northside, and Wildwood.

David Michel, associate executive director for missions extension at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, will trace the ties between First Church and the Mississippi Baptist Convention, and church member Charles Martin, a retired MC professor, will provide a synopsis of the church's new 318-page history which he authored.

The husband-wife team of Bill and Martha Bacon will provide entertainment for the evening. Planners are anticipating about 700 people will attend the banquet.

Rankin will also preach at the church's 10:30 a.m. worship service on February 17. There will be only one worship service on Sunday mornings during the sesquicentennial month of February.

The Rankins, along with all retired foreign mission volunteers who are currently members of the church, will be honored at a 2 p.m. reception in the church's Fellowship Hall.

The February 17 evening worship service at 6 p.m. will feature all career missionaries from the church. The missionaries will tell of their field of service and the years spent on missions activities.

First Church, Clinton, was

founded on February 14 — Valentine's Day — exactly 150 years ago. Rob Boyd is the current pastor.

For more information on the sesquicentennial celebration, contact the church at (601) 924-6705.

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## THANKS FOR ASSISTANCE

Editor:

At the request of the family of Leonard (Lee) Warolin, who recently suffered an accident from a fall on the street sidewalk in front of the offices of the First Church, Picayune, mere words cannot express our gratitude for the immediate actions, assistance, and Christian comfort provided by members of the church and staff who witnessed the accident.

I cannot imagine how we could have managed the situation without their presence and help. One would have to be a Christian to understand the depth of meaning of Romans 8:28 where Paul writes: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Now we know and are certain that God had provided such Christian love and was taking care of us.

Among those who came to our assistance were Bill Hardin, pastor; Bill Stevenson, administrator; Frank Moody, maintenance supervisor; Janet Haselmaier, reception, secretary; and Tammy Dragon, secretary.

Special commendation goes to E. G. Woods, who also accompanied us to the emergency room of Crosby Memorial Hospital and gave so generously of his time to stay with us until Lee was admitted.

It was then learned that he had suffered a broken wrist requiring surgery, laceration of the lip, and scrapes and bruises.

Again, we give God the thanks for providing the love and assistance through his fine Christians. Please keep us in your prayers, and pray for Lee's speedy and successful recovery.

David H. Stockstill  
Staff Organist, Bay Street  
Presbyterian Church  
Hattiesburg

## OUTSIDERS STAY AWAY

Editor:

This is in response to the January 31 letter, "Throw open the door." The thought on autonomy seemed to be a big concern.

The definition of autonomy is the right of self-government. If this is true, then outsiders' help isn't needed.

I have been in the Baptist church about 75 years and we have always been taught the idea of self-government. If we are self-governing, then outsiders aren't needed.

If it isn't broken don't fix it. Let's just spend our time loving and serving the Lord in our own church. This will bring us blessings, as the Lord said, pressed down and running over.

Lou Carroll  
Gulfport

## REGRETS CONFUSION

Editor:

Last November you were sent a complimentary copy of the book, *A Hill on Which to Die*, on behalf of the author, Judge Paul Pressler.

Our company, Rose

Printing, handled the printing of the book and its mailing for Judge Pressler.

We erroneously used the return address of LifeWay Christian Resources in the shipping and this has caused recipients of the mailing to mistakenly assume that LifeWay provided this book.

This is not the case. The author provided your complimentary copy at his own expense and the books were mailed directly from our offices in Tallahassee, Florida.

We regret the confusion our error may have caused and offer our sincere apology.

Charles Rosenberg, president  
Rose Printing Company  
Tallahassee, Fla.

## CLOUDING THE ISSUE

Editor:

Many would cloud the issue of a woman pastor with human reasoning. Some would invoke the slavery issue, and even dare use the Taliban as evidence that women should be allowed to be a pastor.

Others would divide Jesus and Paul by saying that Jesus did not address the issue. Those arguments ignore the biblical requirement that a pastor be the "husband of one wife." The original language of the New Testament may also be translated, "one-woman man."

A woman may serve in any other position in the church except pastor and deacon, since this same requirement was applied to the deacon.

We must choose whether we will use human reasoning or the

Scripture as our guide. Human reasoning leads to death and destruction (Pro. 14:12), while God's Word leads to salvation in Jesus Christ and peace in his will. As for me and my house, we will follow the Scripture.

Rick Henson, pastor  
Oakdale Church, Brandon

## FROM THIN AIR

Editor:

After the January 18 article in The Clarion-Ledger regarding the first female pastor of a church associated with the Mississippi Baptist Convention and the subsequent letters to the editor of The Baptist Record, I feel it is time for a somewhat different two cents to be expressed.

The first problem is a quote from The Clarion-Ledger article. The newspaper quoted one source (an officer or board member, I believe, of the Southern Baptist Convention) who stated that 99% of all Southern Baptists do not believe that women should serve as pastors.

How thin was the air from which that figure was pulled? I think one would be hard pressed to go to any church anywhere in the convention and find only one person out of every hundred that feel women should have a right to serve as pastors.

The second problem is a letter to the editor of The Baptist Record in the January 31 issue. This particular writer has the audacity to compare a church with a female minister to churches "that affirm homosexual unions," as both being grounds for expulsion from the state convention. Give me a break!

Others quote New Testament letters that deal with "authority of the man" and the "silence of the women" in churches as basis for our needs two thousand years later without even taking into account the culture of the first century. Come on; this excuse is getting pretty old.

I think only one Scripture reference is in order here: Gal. 3:28.

Daniel J. Fenn  
Jackson



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.*

*Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.*

*Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)*

*Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.*

*Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.*

*No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.*

*When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.*

## EVANGELISM RESPONSE CENTER ENCOURAGER TRAINING



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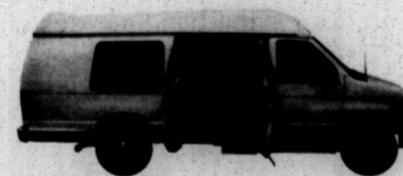
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# Seminarians leave 'small world' to help lost

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Seven seminary students experienced more than the National Football League (NFL) could provide at the "NFL Experience" attraction in New Orleans.

"If you can't talk about Jesus by talking about the church you go to, then you're probably going to the wrong church," he added.

The seminary students say they were given even more

providential opportunities than just talking about church.

James "Tex" Brandon, a master of divinity student at New Orleans Seminary, said he was able to talk about his faith just by having a good attitude throughout the often-hectic day.

"I was just standing there this morning, having a good time, and this girl asked me, 'Why are you having fun so early?' I told her that I have a lot more fun than I used to because of what God has done in my life," he said. "I

was able to share my testimony with her just because she'd never seen a person do that."

Kyle Cox, an undergraduate student at the seminary's Leavell College, said he was able to share with some of the volunteers after they'd asked him what school he attended, while Bauman was able to share her faith by talking about a summer mission trip, as well as talking about the blessing of the money God was providing through the NFL staff position.

Her husband, Nathan, a master of divinity student, was able to share a little about his faith in his interview with the NFL.

"When I was interviewing, the manager asked me, 'If you could have the ideal job, what would it be?'" he recalled. "I told her my ideal job would be to be a missionary in the jungle. She was completely blown away, and I was able to share with her that God had called me to be a missionary and that I wanted to obey him."

In addition to managing the many football attractions for the tens of thousands of participants, these students, all from New Orleans, were able to experience the work of God in some of the hundreds of volunteers and staff around them.

"The seminary is such a small world," said Julie Bauman, wife of seminary student Nathan Bauman. "It was almost refreshing to be around lost people. They act like lost people. They don't hold back on their language or anything."

"Before I came to seminary, I worked in a church. I feel like I've been in this Christian bubble for so long now. Being with lost people has been a daily relationship that I've missed. I didn't know if I could handle it at first."

The students served on the staff of the NFL's weekend family attraction Jan. 31-Feb. 3, where children and adults could play one of several games, sometimes against their favorite NFL players; buy NFL products; and watch several concerts by renowned secular artists throughout the day. The event was the preliminary event for the NFL Super Bowl.

Tim Knopps, evangelist with the Timothy Institute of Evangelism in Oklahoma City, served as an event consultant for the Baptist Association of Greater New Orleans and as one of the leaders of the volunteer staff. Although neither he nor the students are able to mingle with the thousands of people who attend the NFL Experience, Knopps said they had opportunities to share Christ with the volunteers and fellow staff.

"We always tell them to look for the question, 'How did you get to be a volunteer?'" he said. "They can then answer, 'Our church brought a group.' Then the person may ask, 'What church?', and hopefully that will lead them into a discussion about Jesus."



GOING OVER DETAILS — Tim Knopps (left) and James Brandon go over security details at the NFL Experience in New Orleans. A number of New Orleans Seminary students volunteered to help with the Super Bowl event. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)

Though making connections with the lost was rewarding, the team also said it was good to have a support group of Christians, more specifically seminary students, as co-workers.

"The whole thing was a divine appointment of God to put us all together like that," said Sam Purcell, also a master of divinity student at the seminary. "He presented opportunities for us every day."

While they were focused on the spiritual task at hand, the students admit it was fun to see all of the celebrities who attended the event.

"Peyton Manning whispered in my ear," Julie Bauman

said, laughing. "He wasn't flirting or anything, he just wanted to make sure that all of the kids got autographs. That was awesome."

Each student said the event was a great opportunity to meet with lost people and a reminder to seek them out as Jesus did.

When asked, however, if the experience made them more adept at leading a conversation into a talk about Christ, Nathan Bauman said he didn't think they should view it that way.

"I don't think it should be an intentional segue into the gospel," he said. "It's more of a lifestyle. We're talking about our life, and our life is Christ."



A HELPING HAND — Jeremy Blocker, a student at New Orleans Seminary, assisted a fan at the NFL Experience during the Super Bowl. Blocker was one of many students who volunteered to work at the Super Bowl event. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)



WORKING TOGETHER — Julie Bauman (left) helps another volunteer understand her work assignment at the NFL Experience in New Orleans. Bauman's husband, Nathan, is a seminary student at New Orleans Seminary. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)

## Stem cells discovered in adults

WASHINGTON (BP) — The discovery of a stem cell in adults that reportedly has remarkable powers could prove a watershed in the contentious debates over cloning and human embryo research.

A researcher at the University of Minnesota has found a stem cell that "can turn into every single tissue in the body," according to a report in the latest issue of *New Scientist*. The cell might be the "most important" ever discovered, according to the report.

A confirmation of the discovery would mean cells from a person's body "could one day be turned into all sorts of perfectly matched replacement tissues and even organs," *New Scientist* reported.

A validation of the finding also would seriously undercut the campaign by some researchers, patients rights groups and politicians for human embryonic stem cell experimentation as well as human cloning for research purposes. Both procedures result in the destruction of the embryos.

## FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

### Coveting to commitment

Rom. 7:7-8; Phil. 4:10-13; 1 Tim. 6:6-10

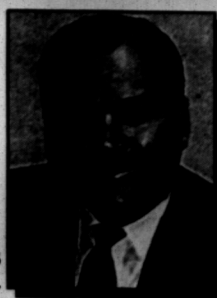
By J. Michael Barnett

It is strange how some small events stay in your mind and memory. Every time I read of covetousness in the Word of God, I think of something I heard when I was in high school. A man I worked for and myself were riding along and we passed a man in a truck pulling a large boat. My friend, a Christian man, said, "I wish I had that boat and he had a better one. That's not coveting is it?"

I don't really think my friend coveted in that moment on the highway. I never heard him talk about that boat again nor did it seem to be a driving passion of his to own one. In reality, however, covetousness is no joking

matter. Covetousness is a sin. In Romans 7:7-8, Paul refers to the 10th Commandment, which says, You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's (Exodus 20:17).

The word "covet" means "to set the heart upon." It comes from two Greek words, one meaning, "to set," and the other meaning "passion." To covet something is to make it your heart's passion. Colossians 3:5 defines it as idolatry. It is included in lists of vile sins (see Colossians 3:5; Romans 1:29; and Ephesians



Barnett

5:3). It is not to be named among the redeemed (see Ephesians 5:3).

Covetousness leads to other sins. In Joshua 7 we read of the disaster of Ai. God had told Israel to not take any spoil from Jericho.

Achan did and thus brought sin in the camp and the defeat of Israel before the people of Ai. When confronted about the stolen goods, Achan said, "When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them" (Joshua 7:21). Covetousness led to stealing, stealing led to deception, and to the defeat of Israel.

It has been said that covetousness is the mother of all sins. It leads to the violation of many commandments. A man covets his neighbor's wife and coveting leads to adultery. A man covets

his neighbor's possession and coveting leads to stealing. What begins in the heart (see Mark 7:21-23) will manifest itself in sinful behavior.

The key to overcoming covetousness is contentment (see Philippians 4:10-13). After years of serving Christ and suffering for Christ, Paul had learned to be content. He learned that the presence of Jesus gives contentment. Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee (Hebrews 13:5).

He also learned that the greatest gains in life have to do with one's relationship with Christ (see 1 Timothy 6:6-8). Paul realized that in Christ one has the greatest place: a home in heaven; in Christ one has the greatest prestige: he is a joint-heir with Christ; in Christ one has the greatest purpose: to be Christ's ambassador; and in Christ one has the greatest partner: he is a co-laborer with

the Lord. These are the greatest things.

While exhorting us to be content, the Scriptures warn us about corruption. Those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs" (1 Timothy 6:9-10). We must covet the things that help us serve Jesus (see 1 Corinthians 12:31; 14:39) so we won't be lured to destruction by temptation. Our love must be focused on Jesus so we won't wander away from the faith.

Covetousness, like all others sins, is not a joking matter. It may be hidden in the heart today, but will manifest itself and end in God's wrath (see Romans 1:29-32).

Barnett is pastor of First Church, Ocean Springs.

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

### Renew your commitment

Deuteronomy 29:1-30:20

By Carleen McGraw

Throughout the book of Deuteronomy, Moses has reminded the Israelites of "all that the Lord had commanded him concerning them" (1:3). God had given them freedom from slavery by his mighty acts.

The Lord had given them the Ten Commandments. In covenant relationship, the people had committed to love the Lord their God, to worship and serve him only. The Lord committed to bless them, to take care of them, to destroy their enemies and give them the Promised Land flowing with milk and honey.

In Deuteronomy 29, "the terms of the covenant the Lord commanded Moses to make

with the Israelites in Moab, in addition to the covenant he made with them at Horeb"

(v. 1) needs to be presented and entered into by all the people. In the past, the people had experienced all the miracles and wonders of the Lord on their behalf, yet they were often stubborn and rebellious.

In order to encourage the people to think about what God had done to uphold his commitment to them, Moses reminded them of "the great trials, those miraculous signs and great wonders" which their eyes had seen.

During 40 years of wandering, their clothes had not worn out, their shoes had not worn out, they did not go hungry or thirsty. Now they are about to



McGraw

cross over into the Promised Land. "All of you are standing today in the presence of the Lord, your God . . . You are standing here in order to enter into a covenant with the Lord your God, a covenant the Lord is making with you this day and sealing with an oath, to confirm you this day as his people, that he may be your God as he promised you and swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (vv. 10, 12, 13).

When the people entered into covenant with the Lord at Mount Horeb, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb, only those who were 20 years of age and younger at that time were alive on this day. Another generation was growing up, and it was time to renew the first covenant, time for all the people now living to enter into the covenant. In doing so, they would also be confirming the curses that would come on them in the event of their disobedience.

In traveling through other nations on their way to the Promised Land, Israel had seen the "detestable images and idols of wood and stone, of silver and gold" worshiped by the people of those nations.

Moses warns the people that should any "man or woman, clan or tribe" decide to "worship the gods of those nations" the entire land would be devastated. Later generations and even foreigners would want to know why all these calamities had come on the land, and the answer would be "it is because this people abandoned the covenant of the Lord, the God of their fathers . . . they went off and worshiped other gods . . . in furious anger and in great wrath the Lord uprooted them . . . and thrust them into another land" (vv. 25-28).

Moses knew these people, he knew their weaknesses as well as their strengths; he knew they would fail to keep their commitment; and he also knew the Lord! In the face of their failures, the Lord still

loved them. Moses assures the people that "wherever the Lord disperses you . . . when you and your children return to the Lord . . . with all your heart and with all your soul . . . then the Lord your God will restore you . . ." (vv. 1, 2, 3). What a promise — not only for the people in Moses' day, but for people in our own day! Moses told the people they did not need some special interpreter or messenger to keep explaining the terms of the covenant to them; the word already is "in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey" (v. 14).

Life, blessing, and prosperity or death, curses, and destruction is set before them. Moses admonition is: "Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life . . ." (vv. 19, 20). The choice still stands!

McGraw is a member of First Church, Louisville.

## Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats,



no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

# Baptist grandmom takes on Bourbon Street

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Georgia Klier is an unlikely first-time missionary, but two days prior to the opening kickoff of Super Bowl XXXVI, this retired nurse and grandmother of three was standing on the corner of Bourbon and Conti streets prepared to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

Klier, a member of Grove Port Church in Canal Winchester, Ohio, has been in the Big Easy for eight days, working alongside a handful of hearty Southern Baptists who troll the streets of the French Quarter in search of revelers who need to hear about Jesus Christ.

"This is my very first mission trip," Klier told Baptist Press. "My children are grown, I had to retire from my job because of a back injury and I was willing to serve."

So why not try a less-threatening first-time mission experience?

"Because this is where the Lord told me to go," Klier said matter-of-factly, "and I've learned over the years to do what the Lord says to do."

With her suitcase in tow, Klier boarded a Greyhound bus near her home outside Columbus and arrived in New Orleans Jan. 25.

"I've majored in stickering and rolling posters," Klier said, "and we've been giving kids football tattoos for days."

The Baptist volunteers worked through the Baptist Association of Greater New Orleans, distributing a faith-friendly sports magazine and other materials.

"It has been so fun and exciting," she said. "And the NFL people have been so nice. Volunteering has definitely been a lot of hard work, but it's worthwhile. We're supposed to step out of our comfort zone. That's what you have to do."

On Feb. 2, Klier was about to radically step out of her comfort zone — taking an evangelistic walk down Bourbon Street on a rowdy Friday night. Baptist Press followed Klier as she made the journey. Following is her story:

6:45 p.m. — Vieux Carre Baptist Church is the only Southern Baptist outpost in the French Quarter. The storefront building looks like any other weatherworn structure on Dauphine Street — apart from a wooden sign hanging outside identifying it as a place of worship. On Feb. 2 it was the starting point for about 12 believers for an evangelism trip on Bourbon Street.

Klier, dressed in gray sweatpants and a jacket, said she was nervous about going into the Quarter.

"It's somewhere between terrifying and awesome," she said, while collecting materials that she hoped will end up



GRANDMOTHER ON MISSION — Georgia Klier stepped out of her comfort-zone and traveled to New Orleans to share her faith in Christ with Mardi Gras participants. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)

in the hands of unbelievers. "Don't get me wrong, I'm happy to be here, but it's a little intimidating."

7:00 p.m. — The believers are gathered together in the center of the worship hall for a time of prayer and singing. Moments later, they bundle up in jackets and prepare to walk into the darkness of Dauphine Street toward the debauchery of the French Quarter.

"I really feel like the Lord has given me a great life," Klier said as she walked along the street. "And now I want to give something back. I've considered possibly getting involved in street ministry back home."

Nearing Jackson Square, Klier joins others in the group as they sing a rousing rendition of Victory in Jesus, drawing stares.

7:10 p.m. — It was at Jackson Square that Klier totally stepped out of her comfort zone. Noticing a Tarot card reader sitting outside Jackson Square, Klier made her move.

"Jesus loves you and so do I," Klier said as she boldly approached the reader. "Would you like something free to read?" To her surprise, the Tarot card reader smiled and accepted the material but others would not be so kind. A fortuneteller dressed in black cursed at Klier and ordered her to leave the square.

Klier smiled and told the man that Jesus loved him. He turned and walked away.

7:30 p.m. — The group leaves the square and turns onto Conti Street, heading to Bourbon. Klier said her heart was still racing from the encounter with the fortuneteller.

"My maximum heart rate has been reached," she said, laughing. "This is so exciting, but it was scary."

Klier said she didn't have any regrets about talking to the fortuneteller or his reaction.

"This is what I asked for," she said. "The Lord is leading me to do this. It's not by my strength, but it's by God's strength."

7:45 p.m. — Klier's group has split up. Only three remain as they get to the edge of Bourbon Street. Their team leader, David Cobb of Gatlinburg, Tenn., stops the team.

He cautions everyone to stay close. Cobb instructs Klier not to stray too far from the group.

"This is what I've been waiting for," Klier said as she merged into a sea of drunken revelers, many hurling obscenities.

The trio sets up shop in the middle of Bourbon Street, with Cobb holding a large banner proclaiming the message of Christ. Klier stands beside him offering materials to those passing by.

8:20 p.m. — Klier is still passing out materials as the crowd grows larger and rowdier.

"I'm really encouraged by what's happened," she said. "That's good. Some have even told us that they love Jesus."

Despite a bitterly cold wind, Klier remained in the French Quarter until late in the night, smiling gently at many lost souls along Bourbon Street, one of the most sinful streets anywhere in the world.

For Klier, her first mission trip was only the beginning of what she said will become a routine event in her life.

"I think missions is a good thing," she said. "It's good that I came here. It's good that we are all here."



PRAYING FOR STRENGTH — A team of volunteers from Vieux Carre Baptist Church pray before witnessing in the French Quarter. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)



View of Bourbon Street

## Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
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CQJJXUM EDU: JMUDJO-  
JXHUU

Clue: R = B

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John Fourteen: Three.